

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 CANBER 05764 212018Z  
ACTION HA-05

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00  
PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01  
SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 ACDA-12 OMB-01 TRSE-00 /107 W  
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R 210740Z JUL 78  
FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA  
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INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK  
USMISSION GENEVA  
AMEMBASSY BANGKOK  
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE  
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR  
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA  
AMCONSUL HONG KONG  
USLO PEKING  
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L CANBERRA 5764

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: SHUM, SOCI, GB, AS  
SUBJECT: HUMAN RIGHTS IN CAMBODIA

1. DAF HAS GIVEN US THEIR CURRENT VIEWS ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN CAMBODIA AND HOW THEY PROPOSE TO TACKLE THE ISSUE IN THE UN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION.

2. ACCORDING TO DFA, FOREIGN MINISTER PEACOCK HAS APPROVED THE FOLLOWING AUSTRALIAN POSITION: (A) AUSTRALIAN STATEMENTS ON CAMBODIA WILL CONTINUE TO REFLECT AUSTRALIAN CONCERN ABOUT THE DENIAL OF BASIC CONFIDENTIAL

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HUMAN RIGHTS IN CAMBODIA. (B) AUSTRALIA (WHICH IS A MEMBER OF THE UN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION BUT NOT OF THE SUB-COMMISSION ON THE PROTECTION OF MINORITIES AND PREVENTION OF DISCRIMINATION) WILL MAKE AN OBSERVER STATEMENT IN THE SUB-COMMISSION DEPLORING THE CURRENT HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN CAMBODIA. (C) AUSTRALIA WILL NOT BE SUBMITTING DOCUMENTS TO THE SUB-

COMMISSION, BUT (D) AUSTRALIA WILL OBTAIN SUCH EVIDENCE FROM REFUGEES INTERVIEWS IN THAILAND AS IT CAN, AND IF APPROPRIATE WILL DRAW ON IT IN STATEMENTS IN THE SUB-COMMISSION AND ELSEWHERE.

3. BYWAY OF BACKGROUND, DFA EXPLAINED THAT GOA WAS A BIT CONCERNED THAT UP UNTIL NOW AUSTRALIA'S POLICY TOWARDS CAMBODIA HAD BEEN A BIT "ONE-DIMENSIONAL". THE GOA WAS CONCERNED THAT IN THE CURRENT POLITICAL CLIMATE IN INDO CHINA, ITS FOCUS SOLELY ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN CAMBODIA MIGHT BE CONSTRUED AS A LACK OF SUPPORT FOR THE PHYSICAL INTEGRITY OF CAMBODIA. GOA HAS GIVEN CONSIDERABLE ATTENTION TO THE CURRENT WAR OF NERVES BETWEEN VIET NAM AND CAMBODIA AND HAS CONCLUDED THAT WHATEVER THE MERITS OF EITHER SIDE'S CASE, A SITUATION IN WHICH VIET NAM MIGHT BE TEMPTED TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF WORLD DENUNCIATIONS OF CAMBODIA'S HUMAN RIGHTS POSTURE BY LAUNCHING AN ATTACK ON CAMBODIA WOULD NOT BE DESIRABLE. THE GOA IS THEREFORE TRYING TO DRAW A DISTINCTION BETWEEN ITS ATTITUDE TOWARD THE CURRENT CAMBODIA REGIME AND ITS ATTITUDE TOWARD THE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF THE CAMBODIAN STATE. ACCORDING TO DFA, "WE DIDN'T WANT TO DO OR SAY ANYTHING WHICH MIGHT ENCOURAGE THE SRV -- WHICH HAS USED CAMBODIA'S HUMAN RIGHTS CONDUCT FOR ITS OWN PROPAGANDA PURPOSES -- TO MAKE MOVES ON THE GROUND WHICH COULD JEOPARDIZE THE CONTINUED EXISTENCE OF AN INDEPENDENT CONFIDENTIAL

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CAMBODIA."

4. AUSTRALIA HAS MADE CLEAR ITS VIEWS ON CAMBODIAN HUMAN RIGHTS CONDUCT, AND DOESN'T WITHDRAW ONE WORD OF THEM; FUTURE GOA STATEMENTS ON CAMBODIAN HUMAN RIGHTS WILL INCLUDE A REFERENCE TO THE GOA'S HOPE "THAT THE DEVELOPMENT OF RELATIONS BETWEEN KAMPUCHEA AND OTHER COUNTRIES, ESPECIALLY THOSE IN THE SOUTHEAST ASIA REGION, WILL LEAD TO AN IMPROVEMENT IN THE CONDITIONS OF LIFE FOR THE PEOPLE OF KAMPUCHEA."

5. DFA NOTED THAT FOREIGN MINISTER PEACOCK FEELS VERY STRONGLY ABOUT THE ISSUE OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN CAMBODIA AND THAT, IN ANY EVENT, FOR DOMESTIC POLITICAL REASONS IT WOULD BE VIRTUALLY IMPOSSIBLE FOR AUSTRALIA'S OFFICIAL ATTITUDE TO CHANGE. THE GOA IS UNLIKELY TO BE ABLE TO RECOGNIZE CAMBODIA IN THE NEAR FUTURE EVEN IF IT WANTED TO (WHICH, UNDER CURRENT CIRCUMSTANCES, IT DOESN'T), IF ONLY BECAUSE IT WOULD BE VIRTUALLY IMPOSSIBLE TO ATTEMPT TO DEFEND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF FORMAL DIPLOMATIC TIES WITH SUCH A REGIME AS CURRENTLY GOVERNS IN PHNOM PENH.

ALSTON

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** HUMAN RIGHTS, REPORTS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 21 jul 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
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**Executive Order:** GS  
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